

NSC BRIEFING

22 June 1960

JAPAN

25X6

I. The violent demonstrations in Japan were

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generated by complex circumstances deriving from Japan's political and social transformation since World War II.

- A. Basic to the developments which led up to recent events has been the widespread public mood of pacifism. A segment of the public has long expressed outright opposition to any military arrangement which might involve Japan in a future war.
- B. Socialists and leftist labor elements recognized this popular state of mind. Over a year ago they began exploiting it to oppose the revision of the security treaty with the US and to attack the Kishi government.
- C. As this leftist drive accelerated in recent weeks, the Communists, who had penetrated the movement, assumed leadership.
  - 1. The Communist direction was reflected in the increasing size, violence, and effectiveness of the latest demonstrations.
- D. A public reaction against the leftist violence failed to appear because of the general political passivity of the people. The public also tended to be responsive to efforts to make Kishi the scapegoat for the recent chaos.

II. Kishi's critical defeat in being forced to cancel the President's visit is making his resignation imminent.

- A. He has become the scapegoat for all the present frustrations and adverse developments.

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- B. There is also a good possibility general elections might be held in an effort to resolve the political crisis facing the government.
- III. Government leaders have professed their awareness of the threat to the present conservative control of the government. Their party, the Liberal Democratic party, however, will find it difficult to agree on a successor to Kishi.
- A. While a temporary, compromise candidate for Prime Minister probably will be negotiated, continued intra-party struggles could lead to defections from the party and possibly to a formal party split.
- B. The growing concern of influential Japanese business interests over the deterioration in the political situation will tend to counter conservative fragmentation.
1. On 17 June the four major business organizations publicly called for the elimination of violence and the restoration of normal parliamentary processes.
- C. Nevertheless, party and government leadership is likely to be weaker and less decisive than under Kishi.
- IV. Confidence gained from the success of their street demonstration tactics appears certain to encourage the leftwing elements to use such tactics with greater frequency.
- A. The leftists have declared the treaty illegal and are calling for continuing strikes and demonstrations.
1. Their campaign will become increasingly anti-American and neutralist. Demonstrations probably will be directed against US installations.

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- B. Japanese university authorities, by refusing to discipline their students and by blaming the government for the current disorders, are, in effect, encouraging continued and expanding violent student agitation.
- V. The US military position in Japan has been seriously weakened and could become precarious if firm conservative leadership of the nation is not reestablished in the near future.

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